



ALPR Impact Report

Dayton Police Department
Kamran Afzal
Director and Chief of Police

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TO THE CITY COMMISSION AND COMMUNITY

General Description

As required by RCGO 34.11, this Impact Report is being submitted for the Police Department to pursue the use of Automated License Plate Readers (ALPRs). ALPR technology is either part of an in car Mobile Video Recorder or a device attached to fixed sites such as buildings, trailers, or utility poles. These cameras read license plates of vehicles and compare them to entries in the LEADS system, or entries made into the system by end users. When the program finds a “hit” for a license plate that is entered into LEADS for either being connected to a crime, or is being sought for a non-criminal issue such as a Silver Alert, it sends a notification to officers letting them know where the car is.

The ALPR database can also be used retroactively to search for vehicles used in specific crimes. For instance, if a red pick-up truck is used in a crime, users can search cameras in a particular area, during the time frame the incident occurred, for red pick-up trucks. The system will show results of the query, and users will be able to look at the license plates to find potential suspects.

Mobile ALPRs

The Police Department has a contract with Axon for the Mobile Video Recorders (MVRs) in the marked vehicle fleet. Under the current contract, new MVRs are scheduled to be installed in the cruisers in 2022. Upon receiving Commission approval, the ALPR feature will be activated. The MVR incorporates ALPR technology in the front camera mounted on the windshield and would effectively provide ALPRs in all police cruisers equipped with MVRs.

Fixed Site ALPRs

Fixed site ALPRs will only be deployed in neighborhoods if the use of the ALPR is recommended in a neighborhood Safety Plan, the ALPRs are requested by that neighborhood or the neighborhoods affected, and the crime statistics justify the use of the ALPRs. A neighborhood Safety Plan is a plan that is developed by the citizens of the neighborhood in order to combat crime or quality of life issues.

The Police Department currently is not utilizing fixed site ALPRs. The department has been approached by businesses in the Old North Dayton area and several industrial areas along Stanley Avenue and Wagner Ford Road inquiring about the use of ALPRs. The businesses have been greatly affected by illegal drag racing. The drag racers are a danger to the community and have caused extensive property damage to many of these businesses. These businesses are a possible location for deployment of fixed site ALPRs, if approved by Commission, and the ALPRs are requested as part of the Neighborhood Safety Plan. The community engagement surrounding the use of the fixed site LPRs has been focused on the technology and not the deployment. If approved, the Use Policy dictates that additional engagement and neighborhood input and approval be obtained prior to deployment in any specific neighborhood.

Data Sharing

All data gathered from ALPR cameras will be property of the Dayton Police Department and will only be shared with other local and state law enforcement agencies. Unless being retained as evidence in a specific criminal case, all data from ALPR cameras will be deleted 30 days after it is recorded.

Community Engagement

Using weekly email newsletters, Community Engagement Officers sent invitations to presidents of neighborhood community groups. There was one meeting held in each of the city's quadrants. The 80 people present were given a presentation by Community Engagement Officers, and representatives for a vendor were on scene to answer questions about the technology. Meeting attendees were provided surveys so they could give feedback on the proposal. A Community Engagement Officer also gave a presentation in Spanish to Hispanic parishioners from St. Helen, St. Mary, and Immaculate Conception churches.

Positive feedback of the technology is that it allows data to be shared with law enforcement in other cities, even though it remains property of the Dayton Police Department. Data is not stored indefinitely, but the audit trail is kept. At least one event attendee voiced his opinion that he couldn't see any reason not to use these cameras. Another attendee liked that the ALPRs would only be deployed if a community requested them as part of the Neighborhood Safety Plan and the crime statistics justified the use of the technology.

Citizen Complaints

There are concerns that the use of these cameras may infringe on citizens' privacy. During the test phase, the concern was raised that the cameras will be used for racial profiling or immigration enforcement. ALPRs take pictures of license plates on vehicles, not the occupants. The technology does not utilize any type of facial recognition technology. They are unable to determine the immigration status or ethnicity of the drivers. The data captured is focused on capturing vehicle information and descriptions.

In terms of privacy, Dayton Police Department policy will prohibit any unauthorized use of data collected from ALPR technology. Police Personnel will only be able to access it for specific criminal investigations. At the neighborhood meetings, Police personnel made it clear to event attendees that the cameras cannot be used for tracking racial demographics, immigration status, or facial recognition.

A citizen expressed concerns that the ALPRs would be deployed in predominantly minority areas and cause officers to have increased interactions with minority community members for minor offenses. It was explained that the ALPRs would only be deployed in the neighborhoods where the community members requested they be deployed as part of the Neighborhood Safety Plan. The ALPRs only read the license plates and not the driver of the vehicle. They only alert officers if the vehicle is entered as stolen, the driver has a felony warrant, or one of the other approved alerts. The ALPR only alerts on felony warrants and not on misdemeanor warrants. This way officers are only alerted when an offender is wanted on a serious charge and not a minor violation such as a traffic offense.

An additional concern was raised recently about whether LPR data is shared with Vigilante (an LPR vendor) who utilizes the data for commercial purposes such as repossession and they also share their data with federal agencies. The current LPR system does not report to Vigilante and is not a Vigilante System. The Axon ALPR system does not share its data with Vigilante's system and the Dayton Police Department has complete control over who would have access to the LPR data.

Impact on Crime

In 2020, a pilot program consisting of 29 fixed ALPRs in the Twin Towers and Walnut Hills neighborhoods was done, and the Department was pleased with the results. The program

produced a 43% drop in crime in the Twin Towers neighborhood, and a drop by 10% in Walnut Hills. If the Police Department implements a full time ALPR program, the fixed cameras would be deployed as part of a Neighborhood Safety Plan, when the community requests the ALPRs, and the crime statistics justify the use of the ALPRs.

Only one Mobile ALPR was in use for during 2021. The user advised since August of 2021, he has used the system to recover 2 stolen vehicles and 1 stolen license plate. An example of a future benefit of widespread use of the technology would be if an officer responded to a report of an armed robbery. When the officer arrived on scene and was told the make and color of the vehicle the suspect left in, the case detective could check the officer's ALPR footage to see if he or she passed any vehicles matching that description when he or she drove to the scene. If the detective found a matching vehicle, that license plate number could be used for the investigation, and the photo would be useful in disproving any claims the suspect vehicle was not in the area at the time of the incident.

Analysis of Discriminatory or Adverse Impact

ALPR systems record only the license plates of motor vehicles. They do not record any kind of demographic information about occupants in the vehicles and no information is shared with Federal agencies. The ALPR system that was tested in 2020 prohibited any information gathered from the ALPR from being used for the purposes of immigration enforcement.

Public Monitoring

Flock, the vendor whose product the Police Department tested in 2020 has a transparency website that is accessible to the public. The website has information about the specific user's ALPR program, such as data retention, number of cameras in use, external agencies that can view this agency's data, number of searches in the last 30 days, number of hits in the last 30 days, and other information.

Internal Audits

An internal audit found was conducted in 2021 of the ALPRs and the audit found no violations of the Mobile License Plate Reader policy in regard to training, data collection, data access, data protection, data retention or public access of the system.

Total Cost

Under the Police Department's current contract with Axon, it is scheduled to add Mobile ALPRs to its marked vehicle fleet in 2022, upon receiving City Commission approval. The cost for the program is included in the existing Mobile Video Recorder Contract.

The Police Department has been awarded a grant for the installation of fixed site ALPRs for 2022 and 2023. There will be no cost to the Police Department to purchase and install the fixed site ALPRs.

Use Policy

The draft Use Policy for the ALPRs is attached to this report.